BRIC:

Winter practice paid off with the club securing 8 PB’s and 2 Silver medals. There were some close medal misses from Chao and Amy, both just missing bronze place, Karen and Helen also came 4th in their 500m and 2k events. Also in the 500m event, Kelly and Heidi placed MKRC in 5th and 2nd position. Heidi picked up her second individual silver in the 2000m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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<th>EVENT</th>
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<td>Head of the Trent</td>
<td>Sunday 28th February</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEHORR</td>
<td>Saturday 5th March</td>
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<td>Race Night 7pm (Woburn Hall)</td>
<td>Saturday 12th March</td>
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<td>HORR</td>
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<td>Vets Head</td>
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We are now over halfway through the head season, and we're about to get to the good bit! By the time you read this we'll have a great day of club racing at Northampton, and will soon be going for our winter race and training weekend at Peterborough. We'll keep having whole club head races once a month, but we're also getting towards the tideway heads, so the competitive sweep squads have got even more racing to look forward to.

What's been amazing to see this season is the number of people regularly coming down not just to our Monday and Saturday sessions, but also to Thursday and Sunday. The extra fitness and technical ability we're all getting is really going to help us when it comes to racing, so let's make sure we keep it up and get the most of all our training sessions by sticking to the training plan and making the best use of the video and water coaching.

As well as all the training we've been doing, we had a great Christmas party followed by the fun Christmas Races. The social and fundraising teams have got lots more events planned for the rest of the year, so make sure you get involved. There's a lot more to MKRC than just the rowing!

CHRIS
It's been great seeing everyone get stuck into the head season, with great enthusiasm and competition showing from all the women!

Going right back to December the performances at the Indoor Champs were fantastic, with great performances from all the women, but special mention to Helen, Jayne, Kelly A and Heidi for great individual performances with PB's galore! The relays were a huge amount of fun, let's see how many teams we can enter next year!

Some great performances at Northampton, despite one rather eventful run! Really promising times given that we haven't actually set our WeHoRR crews yet. Getting our new graduates from the development squad into racing crews straight away just goes to show how quickly they're progressing, slotting really smoothly into the senior squad. The sculling squad is developing really well, with quads and doubles galore putting in a good show, with more to come at Peterborough.

The WeHoRR squad is shaping up nicely, I'm very excited by how well the 8 is going is any combination, looking forward to a great weekend of hard rowing at Peterborough. We're getting closer to setting the race crews, giving us plenty of time to practice and perfect both a first and second WeHoRR/Vets head boat!
Since the last newsletter, Winter training has reached maximum intensity and the physiological benefits are already being seen in the men’s squad. There were some creditable performances in the inspiring surroundings of the Olympic Village for BRIC, with Rod & Chao leading the MK men in Masters and Lightweight events, respectively. They were joined by James and Chris for the Open relay event; although I was not certain if they had enough focus on their race or were distracted by the quality of the Lycra of the GB ladies squad.

The Development men continue to benefit from additional coaching and regular water AND land training, resulting in some fantastic results from Northampton Head. Dan, David and Shaun’s contribution to the men’s IM3 8+ win was exceptional and should make their captain, Cath, really proud, especially when you consider the others in the boat were a masters D ‘Pair’ (Steve and me) and three seniors all shorter than 5’11” (Callum, Chris & James). The untested IM3 4+ winning crew of Callum, Chao, James and ‘Young’ Phil proved how adaptable MK’s men squad is becoming; being able to perform on minimal water time together. Other wins consisted of two ‘returning’ boats. Kevin’s win was notable by the fact that he was racing two classes higher than his status in the IM1 1x. Steve and Rod’s win in the Master D/E 2- was notable by the fact that they had to overcome some very tough competition, indeed! Seriously, it was fantastic to see our Oarsman of the Year returning to health and the Master E 2- back where they belong, winning silverware. A final mention (even if he’s not mine...yet!) must go to Matt, who put in a fantastic effort showing real skill & character (with not a little turn of speed) in his first ever head race in a single. Well done all.

As I finish this little piece I am looking forward to the Peterborough training camp and would like to pre-emptively thank Chris for organising and Tim G & John Impey for agreeing to coach us. I would urge all the men to continue with the training plan and to attend as many sessions as you can. We have started the season well and need to continue to build on our efforts. If we do, the remainder of the Head season should be one to remember culminating, for the 8s, at HoRR in March.
There are some notable rowing faults occurring just before the catch.

As the blade approaches the catch two opposing, but cancelling, failings do occur. Either the blade is ‘skyed’ by dipping hands into the hull and/or the blade hits the water, sometimes whilst still feathered, because the hands are inadvertently allowed to come up. Taken together, the boat may sit, occasionally, but the faults prevail and need correcting.

The cause of the former can mostly be attributed to not squaring properly, whilst the latter, to a lack of concentration and awareness. I am not an advocate of back splashing, or squaring early, although employing the second is beneficial for beginners and development rowers.

A flat hand/wrist/forearm posture of the outer hand, and keeping it so, during a straight line to the catch, would obviate the problems provided the handle, whilst being squared/feathered by the inside hand, is allowed to revolve in that outer hand. It is the outer hand that controls handle height.

Square blading exercises are a good improvement tool as is concentration, to identify hand heights and hand control, during the square blading warm up phase at the beginning of the outing, as mentioned in our first publication. The warm up is not only for the muscles, it is also for the mind.

JC
FITNESS | GOALS

Hip and Shoulder Mobility

Good mobility is about being able to control the joint movement over the full range of motion. This is essential for many strength training exercises as well as helping in preventing injury. Without it, the benefit you can get from your land training is limited.

You may have experienced this when it is difficult to use the correct technique for a certain exercise because of a limited range of motion at certain joints. You may know what to do but your body just won’t let you!

Two key areas are at the hip and at the shoulder. These are sometimes considered as part of our core as they connect our limbs to our torso. By improving your functional mobility in these key areas, some exercises will feel more comfortable, be more effective and your risk of injury will be reduced.

Here are some great videos on how to get more mobility at the hip and shoulders.
Hip mobility [https://youtu.be/JBHzXF-mVjY](https://youtu.be/JBHzXF-mVjY)
Shoulder stretch with towel [https://youtu.be/VAWkYIDH288](https://youtu.be/VAWkYIDH288)
Shoulder stability [https://youtu.be/XIRGAWWF-00](https://youtu.be/XIRGAWWF-00)

HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTE

Before setting out in a small boat, think about your own ability to cope in the event of a capsize. Not every water session has the support of the safety launch, and even with the launch on the water, you may be in the water for quite a few minutes before you are able to attract someone’s attention. Furthermore, the sides of the north lake are quite steep and it is not easy to climb out unaided. Therefore unless you are an experienced rower, if you are in a small boat you are advised to restrict your outing to the south lake.

LIZ
In the winter, water time is limited to just Saturday and Sunday mornings. There are a few things that you and your crew should take on board and maybe discuss before going out. You must not row if any of the following conditions prevail:

* Wind gusts in excess of 25mph or 15mph for Learn to Row or Development rowers
* White caps on waves
* Fog – you must be able to see the opposite bank of the lake
* Ice

There is a computer in the corner of the clubhouse which has a weather station programme. Use this to review the conditions, and if you are unsure, DO NOT GO OUT.

But to even things up and give you something to look forward too......
During the summer months, members are advised to wear adequate sun protection in the form of sun bloc and appropriate clothing, and have sufficient water to prevent dehydration during their planned outing.....bring it on!
All new versions of safety documents, constitution, members handbook and other club documents following the AGM have now been updated on the website.

Liz working on a safety competency checklist shortly to be rolled out for new members/LTR as well as a steering competency.

Liz weighing all the boats as a safety requirement for ensuring trailer is never overloaded which would be dangerous and negate insurance.

Liz F has put together a proposal for Corporate Team Building day as a fundraiser. We need to find a leader to take this forward and look in to feasibility. It could potentially be a huge fundraiser.

Captains are meeting weekly and improved communication and planning is working very well. Video coaching also working well as is having a rota for launch drivers at most sessions. Cherry, Matt and Les now qualified launch drivers.

Race fees are outstanding at an unsatisfactory level. These need to be paid promptly

20 members went to BRIC which is a record number. Heidi won 2 silver medals and a great time was had by all. Plan to go again next year.

Circuits attendance has been good with help from Nick’s training plan.

Lou & Chris had a meeting with Lynda Higgins from Action 4 Youth and links with juniors are to be maintained by involving each other more in activities on and off the water. A proposal was suggested that juniors attend our sessions twice a year to learn to sweep row.

Canoe Club donated a total of £500 towards the pontoon as they use it occasionally.

£3600 received for the pontoon from MKCF. Thanks have been sent with photos.

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Many Thanks to all our February contributors.

Photography courtesy of Benn, Claire, Steve and Rob.